

A Missionary Talk.

BY BYRON TOMBAUGH

Thousands of years ago when Adam was created from the dust of the earth, he was given a work to do. Through the centuries which have elapsed since then, men have been born into the world; like a shrub on the hillside, they have had a brief existence and then disappeared from off the stage upon which the drama of terrestrial life is being enacted. Unlike the plant however, which, when it dies is dead to futurity forever, the spirit of man shall live on through the infinity of countless generations. Intellectual ability and uncontrollable circumstances determined largely what is our duty to our fellow men. However mean our intelligence, and however exasperatingly detrimental to laudable progression may be our governing circumstances we each and all have a mission to perform.

It is not necessary that we shall go to India or to the islands of the sea in order to be a missionary. The youngest child here can do missionary work today if he is so inclined. Every deed done for the advancement of kindness, charity, intellectuality, morality and Christianity; everything for the establishment and love for the true, the beautiful and the good—is the labor—the mission of the philanthropist.

When creation's matin lyric ushered earth's highest inhabitant—man—a little lower than the angels into his transcendent abiding place, humanity then was in a state of purity. Then the forbidden fruit was eaten; man has fallen from his first glorious estate, and cannot now be free from sinful temptation, but can only approximate into perfection.

In imagination cast your eye across the chasm of centuries; across the storm-tossed white capped Atlantic; come with me to the orient; that mountain yonder is Calvary. Do you see the procession coming from out the city? Now it has halted; a cross is erected. Whom is that they are crucifying? Let us draw nearer—behold the noble bearing of that unfortunate man! Who is he and why does he suffer death? See how cruelly the Roman soldiers torture him! Hear the mockeries of the vulgar rabble. Now they are placing an inscription above this criminal; no doubt he is a robber and a murderer. What! that cannot be the right inscription—"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews!" We can see but faintly—a—dense gloom is setting over the place; the spirit of darkness has spread her wings over the land. Oh, the anguish Calvary! Why did Christ die? My friends, to save you and me. He rose, and with a shout of victory he led captivity captive. The Almighty Son of God thus fought and won the battle of human redemption.

We too, have a battle to fight. We must fight against ignorance, superstition and infidelity. We must bear the banner of the Prince of Light. We must keep it unsullied for our own sake, for the sake of others, and for Christ's sake.

In the golden light of the 19th century, in the land of boasted liberty, intelligence and Christianity, we each should be a beacon light to anchor some other poor soul into the harbor of the Blessed. Would it hurt the feelings of any of you if I should say "you are an infidel?" My friend, you who are not trying to follow in the footsteps of Your Redeemer, I say you are worse than an infidel. Why? Because you know your duty and will not perform it. There is more hope for the savage cannibal than for you. Take this to heart; ponder over the injunctions of our Savior—"seek first the kingdom of God;" "now is the time for salvation;" and "my spirit will not always strive with man."

I have a brilliant young friend. At one time he was almost persuaded to be a Christian. He did not deign to listen to the "still small voice." I fear his day of salvation is passed forever. Today, though in the vigor of youth, possessing the charms of strength, culture and learning, he is a drunkard and gambler.

It is an easy matter to prevent smallpox by vaccination. Leprosy is a worse disease than smallpox. My friend, you have the Leprosy.

Moral Leprosy. You have it worse than that poor man who bathed and was cured in the pool of Siloam. You want to be cured? *Siloam is not here.* No matter. A better remedy is always at hand. Be vaccinated with the spirit of God; put on the whole armor of Christ. Take the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, the sword of the spirit, and defy the fiends of earth and the demons of hell. You willingly undergo a little pain to prevent smallpox; will you not suffer a little persecution to transport your own ever-living soul from the torments of the Terrible to the golden gates of the Celestial city?

You think this is not missionary talk. I believe it is. Charity begins at home. I don't like the painter who paints other people's houses, and lets his own get as gray as a rat; nor the blacksmith who shoes other horses, and lets his own limp around barefooted. Our mission here is to save ourselves first and then try to bring other souls into the kingdom. How can you become a missionary? I will tell you. First, by becoming a Christian and trying to do the will of an omnipotent Father and the incarnate Son of the great Jehovah. *This is a personal missionary.* Second by doing unto your neighbors as you would have them do unto you. If they are sorrowful, give them comfort. If they are joyous, rejoice with them. If they are sick, minister unto them. If they are hungry, feed them. If they are poor, give them money. If they are troubled in spirit or without the hope of a blessed Redeemer, pray for them. In all things give them sympathy, and to the letter and spirit, live up to the teachings of the golden rule. *This is a home missionary.* And now we come to what you thought I would talk about from the beginning. The foreign mission. We hear so much about this, that I will say but little concerning it. Our Savior told the disciples to go and preach the gospel to every creature. *We are his disciples.* We must obey his command. Classis Asia is inhabited by superstitious barbarians; the Hindoo mother still casts her child to the crocodile of the Ganges to appease the wrath of some mythical god. The olive colored celestial still bows at the shrine of caste, and suffers the torments attending ignorance, because he does not follow the dictates of a world-renowned and time honored Confucius. The human denizens of the "Dark Continent" can hardly be called human. The Darwinian Theory seems almost applicable here. Superstition is the God of the African and Pantheism is his religion. The heathen is found in every clime. *We must Christianize him.* How shall we do it? We can't bring him to us; we can't all go to him. How shall we accomplish it? In this way. By sending proper teachers to him. Whom shall we send? Christian ministers who are heroic in the cause of the Just One. But few there are who can go without help.

How can you and I help them? First, by giving them some of our money; and second, by giving all our heart, poured forth in prayer for them. Remember the two ways and neglect neither of them.

The time is near at hand when we shall render an account of our time, our money and our talent.

I indulge the hope that when this account is given, we each and all shall hear the Divine approval. "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

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Tartar Mills.

BY MRS. A. A. COBER.

Centuries ago, before and during the Christian era; religious Tartars were known by the length and number of their prayers. They repeated them parrot-like, and so frequently that the soul of prayer was entirely forgotten. In their zeal to encourage frequency in prayer, they constructed boxes with prayers written upon them. These boxes were made in various shapes, as necessity demanded. The most wealthy had them constructed in a comical shape, highly ornamented, and placed in a private room. Below was an attachment by which it was resolved, and there on bended knee the worshiper sat in the most humble attitude grinding out his prayers. The poorer

class need still more mechanism. Necessity demanding their attention to secular interests they constructed their boxes on poles, planted them in a river, then directed a current of water on them, which gave them motion. Or they fastened them at the entrance to their houses or near their work, and when passing by gave them a twirl. Every time their boxes revolved they imagined they prayed once, and the oftener it turned the more prayers they offered. In their blinded delusion they kept on with their mechanical worship till the very essence of religion was forgotten.

Worshiping mechanically was not confined to Tartary alone, nor was it limited to centuries ago, but to day, even with our boasted civilization, our country is turning perhaps as many Tartar mills as there are worshipers. They are not only planted in the rivers, and attached to the sides of doors, but are planted within the hearts of men. Where is the Christian that can say he has never offered a prayer to God that his thoughts were not on secular interests? Or where is the Christian that can say his zeal for the good cause was so strong that he never partook of formal worship? The most pious will assure you they have sent words heavenward, when their thoughts were directed earthward. Prayers thus uttered will no more reach the ears of a Divine Being than did the prayers written on the Tartar mills.

"My words fly up, my thoughts remain below,
Words without thoughts never to Heaven go."

Do we worship mechanically? Are not our thoughts frequently centered on secular interests while we mumble over some stereotyped prayer? Do we take the wings of a fairy and soar away to some happy dream-land while some one is interceding with Almighty God not to cut us down as cumberers of the ground before we awake? It is a shameful truth that there are too many rattling Tartar mills in the church. Many a loud professor (little doer) goes wondering into the land of "nod" while the preacher thunders away on the text "Awake thou that sleepest." Or they shuffle through their hymn books and have the hymns prop up their eyelids and when the Amen is said they arise with a "those are my sentiments exactly. Thank God for this privilege"—of rising. Surely the "height and the depth of this wonderful love" is incomprehensible in the toleration of such hollow mockery. May these words from Whittier be remembered in the day of account.

"What we lack in our work may He find in our will
And winnow in mercy the good from the ill."

Earthly Things Unsatisfactory.

I have read a story of a man whom Chrysostom did feign to be in prison. "Oh," saith he, "if I had but liberty, I would desire no more!" He had it; and then cried, "if I had enough for necessity, I would desire no more." He had it; and then cried, "had I a little for variety, I would desire no more." He had it; and then cried, "had I any office, were it the meanest, I would desire no more." He had it; and cried again, "had I but a magistracy, though over one town only, I would desire no more." He had it; and cried again, "were I a prince, I would desire no more." He had it; and then sighed, "were I but a king, I would desire no more." He had it; and then cried, "were I but an emperor, I would desire no more." He had it; and then exclaimed, "were I but an emperor of the whole world, I would then desire no more." He had it; and then he sat down with Alexander, and wept that there were no more worlds for him to possess. Now did any man come to enjoy what he is said to desire, it would be but a very mean portion compared with God. We may truly say of all the honours, riches, greatness, grandeur, and glory of this world, compared with God, as Gideon sometime said of the vintage of Abiezer, "Is not the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer?" So the very gleanings, yea, the smallest gatherings of God, are far better, and more excellent and transcendent, more satisfying, more delighting, quieting, and more contenting, than all earthly portions are, or can be. —Thomas Brooks.

Believers only can decipher the short-hand of God's Providence.